



STATEWIDE VIRTUAL REFERENCE PROJECT

Steering Committee Meeting Notes

DATE: April 29, 2004

LOCATION: Regional Justice Center, Kent

ATTENDEES: Linda Fenster, Alice Goudeaux, Buff Hirko, Jean Holcomb, Nancy Huling, Lorena O'English, Barbara Pitney.

NOTES: The budget was reviewed. The disappointing reaction to the Library Ambassador announcement (see below) may require the re-assessment of the allocation of funds in the 2004 budget (the final project year—funds must be expended by September 30, 2005). It may be advisable to transfer funds currently earmarked for marketing into evaluation efforts (see VET, below).

Nancy Huling reported on the training class that began April 26. Not only was it the first international group (3 Canadians), but it was also the first class evenly divided between male and female learners!

Although Wally (wa.lii.org) was funded for the current year by state variance funds, it will be funded out of LSTA funds next year. Buff remains the liaison with lii.org.

Work on the Virtual Evaluation Toolkit (VET) is in high gear. The tools for three increasingly sophisticated assessment levels have been identified and are being developed, along with instructions for use, examples of ways to use results to improve service, and related information. Level 1 tools will be used by a pair of evaluators at three test site libraries: King County Library System, King County Law Library, and Skagit Valley College. Level 1 focuses on evaluating customer satisfaction, while Levels 2 and 3 provide a variety of management information such as quantity of use, staff success, and cost-effectiveness. All information resulting from VET will be posted to the project web site as a PDF document after the final reports from test site libraries have been completed. If this exercise proves valuable, we may consider re-contracting with evaluators to implement VET at other libraries during the next federal fiscal year, 10/1/04-9/30/05.

Jean Holcomb reported that Steve Larsen, head of the Consumer Affairs Division of the Attorney General's Office visited KCLL, where they demonstrated QuestionPoint to him. He was impressed, enthusiastic, and interested in the possibility of joining our cooperative. Jean will forward his email address and Buff will send an invitation to join or discuss the possibility.

Buff and Barb reported their disappointment that there has been so little response to the Library Ambassador service. Catherine Lord did make a very successful presentation to the Auburn Kiwanis Club and will probably offer additional programs, and Seattle Public has expressed interest in using Lydia Harris' services. Ambassadors will participate in both Homeschooler events (Puyallup in June, Spokane in August), but no other interest has been expressed in the announcements. Buff will announce the service once more in the new WSL Updates online.

Several members noted the need for VRS trainers to meet for debriefing, then updating and reorganizing the curriculum materials.

Finally, Buff suggested that committee members begin thinking about planning for the final project year, which ends September 30, 2005. Most of the funding is directed toward evaluating the project as a whole, so we will need to determine what measurements to collect and analyze. We will also need to review the final budget, which currently provides equal funds for marketing and training.

The next Steering Committee meeting will be scheduled after the final reports from VET have been submitted.